

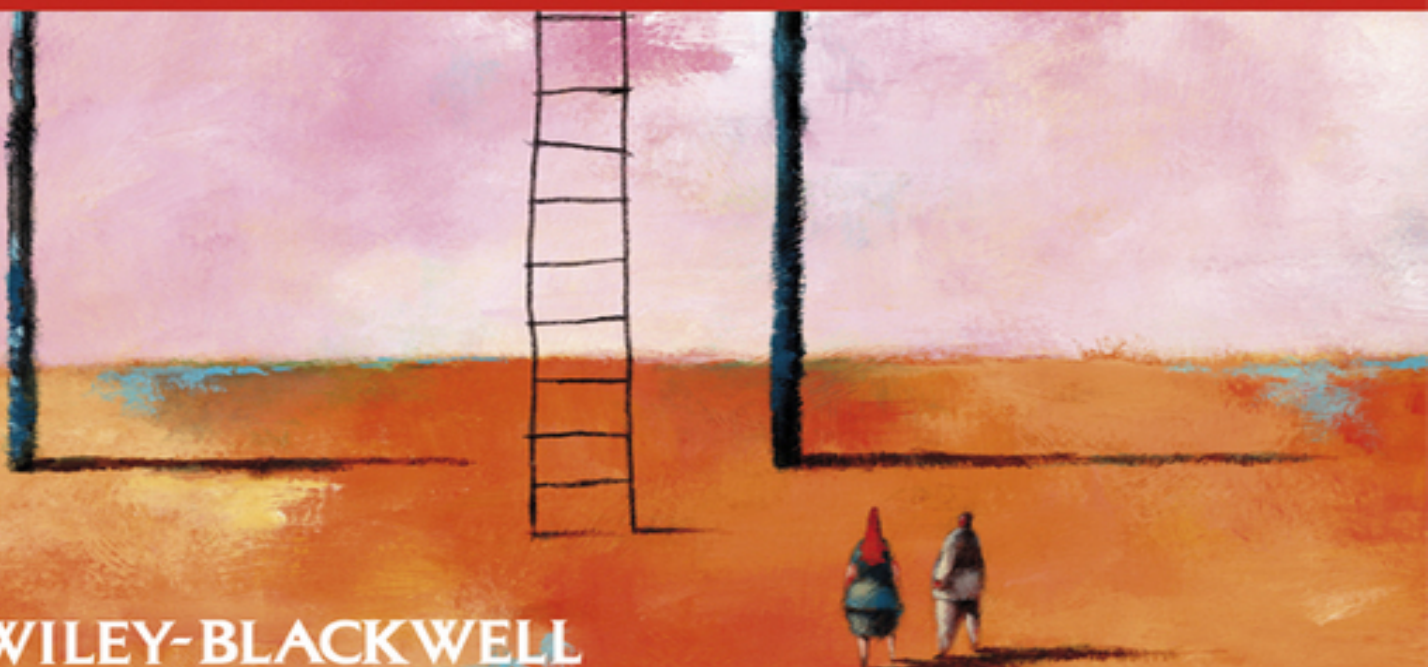
TALENT MANAGEMENT ESSENTIALS

DESIGNING WORKPLACE MENTORING PROGRAMS

An Evidence-Based Approach

TAMMY D. ALLEN, LISA M. FINKELSTEIN, and MARK L. POTEET

 WILEY-BLACKWELL



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Praise for Designing Workplace Mentoring Programs:

"Designing Workplace Mentoring Programs by Allen, Finkelstein, and Poteet does an excellent job of applying relevant theoretical and empirical research for designing, implementing, and evaluating formal mentor programs. I believe that both academicians and practitioners will enjoy and benefit from reading this book."

Daniel Turban, University of Missouri

"The collective mentoring experiences of leaders from major companies went into this well researched book. Read it first and save yourself a lot of misdirected efforts creating an exemplary program for your organization."

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"Allen et al. have created a very practical and useful guide to developing workplace mentoring programs. For any HR Professional considering implementing such a program in their organization, this should be their blueprint."

Mariangela Battista, Ph.D., Vice President, Organizational Culture & Effectiveness, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.

"This essential volume offers a practical blueprint for building effective mentoring programs from the ground floor up. Using case interviews, best practices, and existing research, the authors offer a comprehensive guide that is firmly rooted in cutting-edge research. This is a 'must-have' resource for every practitioner's bookshelf."

Belle Rose Ragins, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

"If you are planning or currently implementing a mentoring program - this book is a must read. Its clear,

concise presentation of research, combined with action plans and case studies takes the guesswork out of program success.”

Ann Gowdey, MSW, Principal, Ann Gowdey Consulting

“For the first time, Allen and colleagues have artfully presented a comprehensive, well integrated set of evidence-based recommendations for the design, delivery, and evaluation of formal mentoring programs in organizational settings. This is a must read book for practitioners, who have been heretofore relying primarily on anecdotal evidence to help them create effective mentoring programs, often times with mixed success. The book also has strong appeal to academics because it provides a roadmap for cutting-edge, timely, and important research that can further reduce the science-to-practice gap related to organizational mentoring. The authors should be commended for their ability to take empirical research on formal mentoring programs and create a set of user-friendly guidelines and diagnostic tools to assist in the development of formal mentoring programs. This book is positioned to have a major impact on the field of mentoring and is sure to enhance the mentoring experience for mentors, protégés, and organizations alike.”

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Designing Workplace Mentoring Programs

An Evidence-Based Approach

**Tammy D. Allen, Lisa M. Finkelstein,
and Mark L. Poteet**

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Editorial Offices

350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA

9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK

The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19
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For Ethan and Mark, the two brilliant lights of my life.

Tammy D. Allen

*For Rhoda and David, my parents, for their constant love
and cheerleading, and for Brian, for making life fun every
day.*

Lisa M. Finkelstein

*For my wife, Tammy, and my son, Ethan, for their continual
inspiration, guidance, and teaching.*

Mark L. Poteet

Series Editor's Preface

The *Talent Management Essentials* series presents state-of-the-art thinking on critical talent management topics ranging from global staffing, to career pathing, to engagement, to executive staffing, to performance management, to mentoring, to real-time leadership development. Authored by leading authorities and scholars on their respective topics, each volume offers state-of-the-art thinking and the epitome of evidence-based practice. These authors bring to their books an incredible wealth of experience working with small, large, public and private organizations, as well as keen insights into the science and best practices associated with talent management.

Written succinctly and without superfluous “fluff,” this series provides powerful and practical treatments of essential talent topics critical to maximizing individual and organizational health, well-being and effectiveness. The books, taken together, provide a comprehensive and contemporary treatment of approaches, tools, and techniques associated with Talent Management. The goal of the series is to produce focused, prescriptive volumes that translate the data- and practice-based knowledge of I/O psychology and Organizational Behavior into practical, “how to” advice for dealing with cutting-edge organizational issues and problems.

Talent Management Essentials is a comprehensive, practitioner-oriented series of “best practices” for the busy solution-oriented manager, executive, HR leader, and consultant. And, in its application of evidence-based practice, this series will also appeal to professors, executive MBA students, and graduate students in Organizational Behavior, Human Resources Management, and I/O Psychology.

Preface

In recent years, formal mentoring programs have become increasingly recognized as an organizational best practice. Mentoring programs help organizations develop leaders, retain diverse and skilled employees, and enhance succession planning. Executed properly, such programs can be used to give organizations a competitive edge in the escalating “war for talent.” However, as scientists-practitioners who have been conducting research and working with organizations on employee development issues for many years, we have been painfully aware that there has been little in the way of evidenced-based guidance to organizations with regard to developing formal mentoring programs. This book is designed to fill this gap.

Individuals looking for a “one-size-fits-all” guide to formal mentoring programs may be disappointed with our efforts. We took the approach that organizations are best served by having a clear understanding of the various issues that should be taken into consideration when designing and executing a formal mentoring program. It is our ultimate goal to give organizations the information they need to build a customized mentoring program that meets each organization’s unique needs. We provide tools that we believe will be useful toward that end and we share examples from organizations experienced in running successful programs. Readers of the book will come away with an actionable guide and plan for the development of programs that can be tailored to their own organization.

Two overarching themes are repeated throughout the book. One theme is that organizations should develop the program with specific objectives in mind and to base decisions regarding the design and structure of the program on those objectives. The mentoring program should be strategically aligned with the organization’s core values and mission. This is a simple message applicable to practically

any organizational intervention. The second theme is that organizations should keep in mind that, at its core, mentoring involves an interpersonal relationship. This is the essence of what makes a formal mentoring program unique from, but potentially more powerful than, many other organizational programs and, ironically, what makes a formal mentoring program difficult to implement successfully. Accordingly, decisions regarding design features and structure should be made with the thought of facilitating effective relational processes.

Our recommendations are based on the context of a one-on-one relationship in which the mentor is the senior employee and the protégé is the more junior employee. There are other less common formats that formal mentoring programs may take that include peer mentoring, group mentoring, upward mentoring, or a combination of these. We believe there are benefits to these types of programs. For example, the argument has been made that by having a protégé interact with more than one mentor (and vice versa), the importance of (and problems with) “interpersonal chemistry” can be lessened, and the protégé also has the benefit of being exposed to multiple viewpoints. Upward mentoring programs, in which junior employees take the role of the mentor and members of upper management are the protégés, can be an effective way of bringing new knowledge and expanded awareness to senior leadership within the organization. However, research on these alternative forms of mentoring is extremely scarce. Because the majority of formal mentoring programs and research continues to focus on one-on-one relationships, our guidelines also reflect that mentoring format.

There are some distinct terms used in the book that we want to define for readers. A *meta-analysis* is a statistical method that combines the results of multiple independent research studies that examine a single research question of

interest. When the results of a meta-analysis are reported, this indicates that the data, results, and conclusions presented are based on a combination of multiple studies rather than a single research effort. Understandably, this leads to more reliable and valid conclusions. Although we do not advocate that any one term is better than the other, we have elected to use the term *protégé* when referring to the targeted learner within the formal mentoring program. In other books and within many organizations, including those we interviewed, the term “mentee” or “mentoree” may be considered acceptable and used instead of “protégé.”

Features of This Book

When we began planning this book, we knew we wanted to interview people who manage mentoring programs in order to provide readers with an “on-the-ground” sense of what is really happening within the day-to-day operations of a program, what is working, and what is not, in order to bring to life our research-based recommendations. We designed a semi-structured interview that followed the format of the book, tracing a mentoring program from its initial inception through planning, support, goal setting, matching, training, monitoring, and evaluation. We conducted interviews by phone. Some of the questions included:

- What are the goals for the program?
- How is support for the program demonstrated to participants?
- What characteristics are used in making matches?
- Are there any components of the training that you think have been particularly useful or effective for the pair to hit the ground running?
- Have you tried anything in the course of the program that did not work out the way it was intended?

Our sample of companies included in these interviews was not random. We relied on our professional contacts and personal knowledge of companies with programs that we admired. We were only able to talk with those who wanted to talk about mentoring. However, we were delighted that a wide variety of individuals, who represented a variety of industries and types of mentoring programs, were willing to share their time and their stories, providing a unique window into operational mentoring programs. Information gleaned from these interviews can be found throughout the book featured in “Case Study” and “Lessons Learned” boxes. Additionally, in “Case Study Summary” boxes, we highlight common themes that cut across multiple companies. With regard to the organizations interviewed, we respected their request to be identified by name or to remain anonymous. Accordingly, throughout the book the reader will note information sometimes references specific companies and sometimes references companies by industry.

Other notable features of the book include an assortment of tools, forms, questionnaires, and exercises that can be readily copied or modified for organizational use. To make it easy for the reader to locate, these features are included at the end of the book as a set of Appendices. “Good to Know” boxes that include summary points related to research findings are found throughout the book. Additionally, at the end of most chapters, we provide a step-by-step action plan as an implementation guide to the points covered in the chapter.

We are excited to meld our collective knowledge of the empirical research on mentoring with common practices within organizations in the attempt to guide organizations toward the successful development and implementation of formal mentoring programs. Additional collaborations between organizations and researchers are needed to

continue to hone what we know and to enable the dissemination of evidence-based knowledge of effective mentoring practices for all stakeholders. It is our hope and our intent that this book will help organizations harness the power of mentoring in a way that benefits both individuals and organizations.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As the number of organizations implementing workplace formal mentoring programs continues to grow, such programs can no longer be considered but one more passing fad. The proliferation of formal mentoring efforts is no surprise, given the vast array of benefits that have been associated with mentoring. Mentoring relationships are thought to serve a critical role in an employee's career and skill development, key to retaining top talent, and a fundamental way by which organizations can shape corporate leadership. Given the continuing need for companies to groom early-career employees for succession planning purposes, to facilitate the upward mobility of under-represented groups, and to respond to organizational structural changes, there is reason to believe that the use of such programs will continue to flourish. However, the implementation of these programs should be done with care in that a poorly designed and executed formal mentoring program may do more harm than good.

Until recently, there has been very little empirical research to help guide the development of workplace mentoring programs. The aim of the current volume is to provide guidelines based on a synthesis of empirical research so that formal mentoring programs can achieve their full potential as a significant employee development tool. The recommendations made throughout the book are based on the existing research evidence and supplemented by examples based on interviews conducted with organizations that have formal mentoring programs in place.